

THE DAILY
SHORT STORY

Her Answer

By HORACE FORD.

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"BUT, dear, won't you give me your answer now?" There was anxiety in Henry's voice. "You know I love you—won't you tell me whether there's any chance for me?"

Helen West lowered her eyes. Henry waited, alternately hoping and fearing. Finally she spoke.

"Henry, you must give me time to think it over. I don't want to make a decision like this suddenly. I will tell you—you are coming to our house for Christmas Eve, aren't you?"

"Why, yes. Your mother was kind enough to invite me."

"Well, I will tell you that night. Now don't look so downcast!" Her voice took on a note of pleasant raillery. "It's only a week off, and surely you can wait that long, can't you? And you must go now—it's half past eleven."

Henry Kenyon went into the crisp sparkle of the late December night with his mind vibrating between hope and fear. He loved Helen sincerely and with all his heart, and when he had asked her to marry him it was with the hope that she returned his feeling and would make him the happiest man in the world by saying yes. But he knew Helen, and he knew that when her mind was made up there was no changing it. "Wait till Christmas Eve," she had said; so there was nothing to do but wait.

The week dragged itself through somehow. There was last-minute shopping to attend to, cards to be sent out—in fact, all the bustle that fills the last week before Christmas.

Ordinarily the time would have sped all too fast, but to Henry West it seemed seven ages before he betook himself to the Wests' house for their Christmas Eve party. His heart beat hard as he entered and returned the greetings of the family and the assembled guests. He met him and answered, but she was just the same as ever. The evening's festivities kept her busy and prevented him from having even a moment alone with her. As the time for departure drew near and some of the guests said their good-nights, Henry's impatience knew no bounds. At last it was midnight, and amid a chorus of "Merry Christmas" the last guest departed. Henry, on Mrs. West's invitation, was to spend the night there so as to make an early start for the holiday party on Christmas day.

As the last guest went away Henry looked about for Helen, but she was nowhere to be seen. Mrs. West came to his rescue.

"The gifts are all piled up in the music-room, Henry," she said. "Yours is in there, too—it might be a good idea if you opened it now. We're going to make an early start in the morning. Mr. West and I have opened our things and Helen has disappeared, probably to look over her trinkets in her room before going to bed. You run into the music room and look at yours. I picked it out myself, and I'm very proud of my taste. Good-night!" and she was gone. Henry, with a heavy heart, entered the music-room. Helen's absence could mean only one thing—she had decided to refuse him and did not want to tell him so to his face. Well, he would see what the Wests had picked out for him, anyway. He entered the room and closed the door.

In the darkened room there were bundles of all shapes and sizes, ready for the morning's distribution. One in particular he noted with his name pointed on it in huge letters. It was an enormous box, nearly six feet high and three square. He looked at it in amazement at its size, and then he smiled. It was just like Mrs. West to fool him. Whatever his gift was, he would find it in the middle of that box, probably in layers of excelsior and carefully hidden. He grinned. Mrs. West was fond of mild practical joking. It was just like her to put a scarfpin or a pair of cufflinks in a box big enough to hold a sectional bookcase and make him spend an hour or so hunting for it in the packing. He snipped the string that bound the box and the huge sheet of wrapping paper fell off with a rattle. The front of the box was of one piece of heavy cardboard, held in place with a few tacks. He slipped the blade of his knife under the heads of the tacks and twisted them out one by one. When the next to the last tack was nearly on the table—Henry hated making a mess—he paused a moment to think of Helen. A quick pain gripped his heart at the thought of her now lost forever. Then he took a new grip of himself. He would take the blow like a man—and now to see what Mrs. West had hidden for him.

The last tack tinkled on the floor. Henry stooped to pick it up, and as he did so the cardboard fell sideways, revealing the interior of the box. Henry straightened and looked, prepared to dislodge the packing.

Then he stood motionless, spell-bound. Inside the box was something glittering and shimmering—a ball-dress—the same he had seen Helen wear that very evening. And from the shadowy interior two white arms stretched out to him and a voice—the voice of his dreams—said softly:

"Do you like your Christmas present, Henry—dearest?"

A moment later and he held his Helen in his arms, his heart thumping madly with joy. And so absorbed did the couple become that neither of them heard the door open, nor did they realize that Helen's mother was in the room till her voice beside them startled them into a realization that life was still going on.

"Well, Henry, do you like my Christmas gift to you? I told you that I had picked it out myself and that I was proud of my taste. Do you like it?"

"Oh, Mrs. West—" Henry stammered.

"Not another word, Henry. I'll give you half an hour to say good-

Flowers Of
Velvet Trail
Over Frock

By CORA MOORE

NEW YORK, Dec. 21.—Flowers, velvet, silk and embroidery, are very much used this season. Here is a suggestion from "Jimmie" at the Apollo theater in New York.

It is a dance frock of white silk net and silver cloth. The silk net, three layers of it, is cut in deep, sharp points with all edges bound with silver braid. Then there is a pointed corsage of crinkled silver brocade which is crinkled down the back of the skirt in a broad sash panel.

But the chief feature of interest is a garniture of velvet anemones, strings of them that wind their way down each side of the skirt, trail over the front, underneath the top layer of net and then hold over the corsage and outline the sleeves.

night, and then you two must get some sleep, for we're starting early in the morning. Good-night and Merry Christmas!"

Merry Christmas, mother!" echoed Helen and Henry.

SISTER MARY'S
KITCHEN

(Copyright, 1920, N. E. A.)

Even with the greatest care, bits of parings and one thing or another are sure to accumulate in a sink during the preparation of a meal. These must not be forced down the drain but taken from the sink and disposed of.

A piece of cardboard makes a fine scoop to use to clean the sink of anything that escapes the little perforated container most housekeepers have in their sinks. The cardboard clings closely to the enamel and scrapes clean without scratching it. It is then thrown into the garbage or burned and a distasteful task is done.

So many things come in boxes nowadays that one always has plenty to be quite extravagant with.

Menu for Tomorrow

Breakfast—Cereal with chopped figs, cinnamon toast, apple sauce, coffee.

Luncheon—Tomato bouillon, salmon salad, health bread and butter prune cake, tea.

Dinner—Chicken en casserole, mashed potatoes, baked onions, celery, baking powder biscuits, peach butter, squash pie, coffee.

My Own Recipes

If the salmon is carefully picked over and every particle of skin or bone removed the result is really a very dainty salad. Before adding the salad dressing to the fish, season well with salt, pepper and a liberal amount of lemon juice. Olives stuffed with pimientos are quite an addition to the salad.

PRUNE CAKE

2-3 cup butter and lard.
1 cup sugar,
3 eggs,
2 cups flour,
1-2 cup sugar,
2 teaspoons cinnamon,
1 teaspoon allspice,
1 teaspoon soda,
1 cup cooked chopped prunes.

Cream shortening and sugar. Add yolks of eggs well beaten. Measure flour and sift twice. Sift cinnamon allspice and soda with flour. Add sour cream to first mixture. Add dry ingredients. Add prunes and fold in whites of eggs beaten stiff and dry. Bake in layer cake pans in a slow oven. Put layers together with the following filling and cover the cake with white icing.

FILLING

2 egg yolks,
1 dessertspoon flour,
1-2 cup sour cream,
1-4 cup sour cream,
3-4 cup chopped prunes,
1 tablespoon butter.
Mix ingredients and cook till thick.

Bills may be hard to meet, but they're almost impossible to dodge. MARY.

Style Notes

Footwear in black and white combinations has been popular in Paris and it is said that it will be the fad during the coming season.

How to Adjust A Veil Properly

If one wishes to wear her veil in a distinctive manner, it should be adjusted so that the lower edge is drawn diagonally across the face, accentuating the tilted line of the hat. The proper depth of the veil is between chin and eyes or just below the eyes.

CONFESSIONS
OF A BRIDE

(Copyright, 1920.)

"Few human beings will face the truth about themselves! You know that, Mr. Lorimer. Of course I can talk to you just as plainly as I talk to Jane. You've guessed that I have an errand husband, but frankly, you know well that Ewart wouldn't understand a word of the real truth about his conduct, even if you were to put it to him! Why, you couldn't possibly make him see that I, his wife, have any right to know a single thing about what he does."

"The right to one's individuality—that seems to be a popular theory," I put in bitterly. "It's the defense of those who assume that a man can be happy with anybody except the one woman he has himself chosen for his wife."

"Who wrote that?"

"Chester!"

"I guess Ewart has plenty of company. Anyway, no matter what he does, I am to accept him, and play up to him as the perfect husband! If I do, we get along all right! But only—if I do!"

Martha spoke as gently, as impersonally, as if she were arguing a land case. She had her tears, and her facial expression, and her emotions in control at last. I envied her. Would I ever be able to imitate her? It would be worth while to copy her because, as Daddy remarked concerning her police:

"Martha, you're a corking good sport! And let me tell you that if you want to win out—want to make things come your way, no matter what Ewart has been up to, you'll do it in your present spirit of sweetness and calmness rather than by spasms of hysteria which women usually pull off on such occasions."

"I'm not so sure about that," Martha replied. "You see Ewart never pays any attention to me when he is turned by another girl's charm. Why, he doesn't see me at all! Nor his son, either! Preoccupation is the first symptom he shows of a new romance in his life! He never guesses how I suffer, how I miss him! And he never perceives that I am feeling badly—unless I weep!"

Daddy Lorimer looked up suddenly as if he had caught, for the first time, the full significance of hysteria.

"I see! I see!" he said. "Martha, I believe you've hit a big idea."

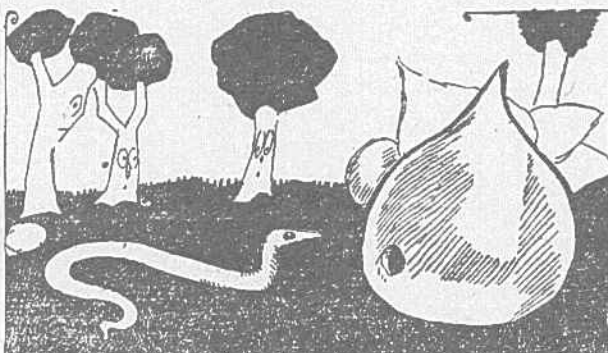
ADVENTURES OF THE TWINS

By OLIVE ROBERTS BARTON.

Wiggley Worm Rides to School

Now then, Wiggley Worm didn't like school a bit better than Muff Mole, or Flop Field Mouse, or Cuttle Coltonall, or anybody, and so he conceived the wonderful idea of playing hooky. It wasn't a new idea by any means, for just the day before hadn't Scamper Squirrel stayed away, scrunching around among the chestnut burs and dry leaves for the brown satiny chestnuts. In fact, Scamper was still worrying about how'd he get gracefully out of his scrape and explain to Mr. Scribble Scratch, the fairy schoolmaster, and to Nick, the attendant officer, how he happened to be away, and not have to sit in the corner all day wearing the special dunce cap Nancy made for truants.

Wiggley liked chestnuts just as well as Scamper did; moreover, he had friends who lived inside some of them, and as he was crawling slowly along the edge of the woods toward the old oak tree where the Magical Mushroom was ringing the bell for school, he stopped and



He Found a Nice Round Hole in the Stiff Shell

looked around a bit in the hope of getting a bite to eat, and in good company. He'd not long to wait, for lifting his head and sniffing this way and that, he smelled chestnuts, sweet and alluring.

Over he scrambled, and wasn't he lucky, though. He found a nice round hole in the stiff shell and crawled inside. Nobody home, but he'd wait, and in the meantime he'd eat.

Scamper came along just then, scratching his head for an excuse for yesterday's absence. Something to put Scribble Scratch into a good humor would be the very thing.

Ha! Chestnuts! That's what he'd do—take the teacher a present of a handful. A fine peace offering!

Wasn't it just too provoking that one of the nuts happened to be Wiggley's refuge, and the fat little worm found himself in school after all. It was too disgusting!

Wiggley meekly crawled to his seat.

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men hate hysteria—they don't want to be moved—and women don't have hysterics for the fun of it, nor to relieve their feelings! Men force women to the wall, right into these fits of weeping which they hate, because men don't see

and won't see how a woman suffers—until she cries! Daddy looked at his watch. "Gosh!" I must call up mother! She wasn't feeling so well this morning!"

He stepped to the phone, and I smiled in spite of myself. Daddy



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